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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Assistance for humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development for Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/105 of 25 November 2002, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-eighth session on the status of implementation of assistance for humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development for Timor-Leste. The report covers the period from July 2002 to July 2003, subsequent to Security Council resolution 1410 (2002) of 17 May 2002, by which the Council established the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

The mandate of UNMISET, which extends from 20 May 2002 until 19 May 2004 is: (a) to provide assistance to core administrative structures critical to the viability and political stability of Timor-Leste; (b) to provide interim law enforcement and public security and assist in the development of a new law enforcement agency, the National Police Service of Timor-Leste; and (c) to contribute to the maintenance of the external and internal security of Timor-Leste.

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** The submission of the report was delayed to allow sufficient time for the clearing departments to review and approve it.

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The present report highlights the external assistance provided in building the capacity of the public administration to respond to the evolving security situation and emerging development requirements. The report summarizes the latest situation as regards assistance provided for humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development, in particular in justice, public administration, agriculture, health, education and infrastructure rehabilitation, as well as support extended to vulnerable groups, including women and refugees.

The scaling down of UNMISET and emphasis on longer-term development challenges means that the role of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes is gaining importance. The present report explains various United Nations assistance activities undertaken and identifies key objectives and outputs that United Nations entities have agreed to achieve through the establishment of coordinated mechanisms and the implementation of specific joint actions within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

I. Security

1. A number of security-related incidents occurred in Timor-Leste in the last months of 2002 and early 2003. Following the riots that took place in Dili on 4 December 2002, the situation in the country appeared to have gradually returned to normal. However, the incidents involving armed groups in Ermera district in January and February 2003 presented new security challenges to the fledgling country. The response from Timorese security organs, as well as the police and military components of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) to those incidents revealed the need for renewed efforts to strengthen the Timorese police force and address the new challenges.

2. Bearing in mind the changes in the security situation and the emerging threat of armed groups, the Security Council approved the Secretary-General's proposal for a slowdown in the phased withdrawal of the peacekeeping forces, maintaining the current strength until October, before the planned decrease of its strength by half in November and December 2003. Similarly, the strength and composition of the United Nations police component were adjusted and a specially formed unit was set up to deal with demonstrations and riots, while special-purpose units of the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) were established and an extended and reinforced regime of training for Timorese police officers was drawn up. Meanwhile, the UNMISET police component continues to transfer its authority to the PNTL in the districts, while the Border Patrol Unit officers of PNTL have begun to assume responsibility for some crossing points along the border.

3. Recognizing that security and stability are a prerequisite for the rehabilitation and development of Timor-Leste, UNMISET and the entities of the United Nations system are intensifying their efforts to address key institutional challenges of PNTL while taking into account the national security and defence framework. In the joint efforts to support the Government in strengthening its national police force as an accountable, democratic, professional and effective law enforcement agency, UNMISET, in cooperation with United Nations entities and development partners, has taken follow-up action as recommended by the joint assessment mission. Specific measures taken in the past several months include the adoption of the 12-month Plan of Action (for May 2003 to May 2004) by a PNTL Institution-Strengthening Committee chaired by the Minister of the Interior with the participation of relevant PNTL officials together with representatives of relevant government organs, civil society, UNMISET, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and development partners. Recognizing the role of the police as a key institution in maintaining long-term peace and internal security, the Government, UNMISET, United Nations entities and development partners are making joint efforts to ensure the successful implementation of the Plan of Action in developing an institutional framework for the PNTL. Continued efforts by the international community and the United Nations are crucial for the successful implementation of the Plan of Action, which must of course also ensure local ownership and sustainability.

4. Further progress in the development of the PNTL as a viable law-and-order organ has been made by the Government with the support of UNDP and UNMISET through the implementation of two successful capacity-building workshops, which sought to bring the PNTL into line with internationally accepted standards of policing. Both workshops, the international workshop on the institutional capacity-

building of the PNTL, held in April 2003, and the needs assessment workshop for the special units of the PNTL, in June 2003, fulfilled their objectives in providing specific recommendations and suggestions to the PNTL's institution-strengthening process in accordance with the Plan of Action (see para. 3 above). The workshops had wide participation from all sectors of the Government, the United Nations and civil society, with 230 and 180 participants, respectively. The workshops were attended by government leaders, UNMISET senior officials, more than 70 PNTL officers, ambassadors and other representatives of development partner countries. The workshops increased the awareness of PNTL officers and stakeholders of the importance of maintaining the independence and professionalism of the PNTL and managing it in a transparent and accountable manner.

5. Significant challenges remain to be faced in strengthening the PNTL and building its capacity to assume sole responsibility for law enforcement in Timor-Leste. Further work is necessary to ensure that standards currently being developed are transformed into best practice in the field through training and sufficient support. The policy-making capacity of the PNTL and associated ministries also requires bolstering to ensure that the force can recommend appropriate policy responses in an evolving security situation. With a relatively junior police force, ongoing field training and evaluation of skills is vital, as is adequate resourcing of the PNTL. Additional resources may also be required should the Government proceed with its plans to develop further specialized PNTL units, including the Border Patrol Unit and the Rapid Deployment Service.

II. Development of the justice sector

6. Considerable progress has been made in formulating civil and criminal codes, which provide the framework for most other laws. The Statute of Judicial Magistrates has been drawn up and the Superior Council of the Magistracy was established to make possible the full functioning of the judiciary with the appointment of the President of the Court of Appeal as President of the Superior Council of the Magistracy. The Superior Council of the Magistracy is expected to appoint judges to the district courts following successful completion of all requirements, including training to be appointed third-class state judges. Legislation for public prosecutors and public defenders has been drafted and is expected to be adopted by the National Parliament by the end of 2003. Significant improvement is expected in the ratio of cases taken to court to cases actually brought to trial. In addition, the systems for registration, including notary, civil identification and state property administration, are expected to be established during 2003-2004.

7. Dili Court is now operational and the physical facilities of Suai District Court and the Baucau Prosecutor's Office have been improved. Suai District Court opened in September 2002, with the support of UNDP, and is expected to become operational in 2003. The Baucau District Court is operational at a minimum level. Half of the prosecutors, public defenders and administrative staff available in Timor-Leste have benefited from the on-the-job training provided by UNDP. It is noteworthy that 20 per cent of the trainees were women.

8. A post of *provedor* (ombudsperson) has been established following district-wide consultations and in collaboration with the human rights adviser to the Prime Minister.

9. In November 2002, the Government and UNDP conducted a review of the justice system in order to identify areas most in need of technical assistance and support from the international community and in order to establish strategies to improve access to justice for Timorese citizens. The follow-up review mission in February 2003 highlighted a number of serious concerns, including training needs, inadequate access to justice and lack of adequate facilities, including case management procedures. One serious concern highlighted was the vacuum left by the departure of the seven or eight judges who leave every year for training in Portugal. It is unclear whether or not international judges will be recruited to replace the local judges while they are training abroad. The Government and UNDP are currently finalizing a comprehensive justice sector support programme for possible support from development partners.

10. In the areas of juvenile justice, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided technical support and training to raise awareness about child rights, protection and juvenile justice among members of the judiciary. In-service training on child rights and juvenile justice for PNTL officers and prison warders was also provided in seven districts.

III. Building capacity in public administration

11. On the civilian side, the administrative capacity of public servants is being strengthened through on-the-job training provided by international advisers and through formal training undertaken both in Timor-Leste and abroad. The 100 international stability advisers have met critical needs for the delivery of essential public services and at the same time have undertaken mentoring and coaching of their national counterparts. They have been joined by 59 out of the 200 development advisers who have been recruited to meet the capacity-building requirements of government ministries and agencies. The 59 development advisers are expected to be supplemented by an additional 71 advisers. UNMISET and UNDP are assisting the Government in developing a strategy to meet the capacity-building requirements in public administration for the next three to four years.

12. With the assistance of UNDP, the Ministry of State Administration has drafted a civil service act, which will target gender equality through (a) principles of employment promoting equality among men and women; (b) the establishment of basic mechanisms, staffed by both women and men, for monitoring of the civil service; and (c) integration into the civil service act of some articles providing for affirmative action to involve women. Extensive consultations covering all 13 districts have been held by UNDP in that connection and the final draft was reviewed by experts and is expected to be approved by the Council of Ministers shortly for submission to the National Parliament.

13. In May 2003, the Government reported successful implementation of the one-year capacity-building programme for the National Museum of Timor-Leste with the assistance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Ten senior national staff from the culture sector attended training in 32 national and local cultural and educational institutions in Japan. Participation of staff in courses such as museum conservation, documentation of cultural heritage, development of educational materials and practical exhibition management greatly facilitated the ongoing work of the National Cultural Centre, Uma Fukun.

14. To promote a fair and transparent electoral process, UNDP assisted the former Electoral Commission in drawing up an election manual and distributed 15,000 copies throughout the country. Some 100,000 copies of the Constitution in booklet format have been distributed by Parliament. Through its civic education programme, UNDP made approximately 60 grants to districts, primarily for use by grass-roots organizations, including a significant number of women's groups. Regional civic education resource centres were established in Ainaro, Baucau and Oecussi. Sixty-five Timorese district electoral officers were trained in information technology, management and leadership skills. A group of six Timorese trained in graphic design and business management are now providing services to the Government, United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others. The Government, however, has recently decided to incorporate the secretariat of the Electoral Commission into the Ministry of State Administration.

15. The civic education development programme includes activities aimed at increasing the capacity of civil society organizations in analysis, advocacy and social mobilization. The NGO Forum continues to function as a membership-based organization, and sent members to the 2002 World Social Forum. Training and small grants to support NGOs and provision of Internet access by UNDP enhanced the relationship between civil society and the Government. However, provision of Internet access by UNDP to NGOs has ceased as a result of a licence problem that arose following the inception of a new telecommunication company.

IV. Agriculture, livestock and fisheries

16. The importance of rural and agricultural development has been well reflected in the first National Development Plan, in which agriculture is one of the three main priority sectors. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is now being restructured into three departments, the Department of Agriculture and Livestock, the Department of Fisheries and Marine Environment and the Department of Forestry. The Research and Agriculture Extension Unit and Policy and Planning Unit will be fully established by mid-2003. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is also planning administrative decentralization in the east, central and western regions, aiming at more efficient operation, monitoring and services to farmers in remote districts.

17. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is starting its support to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries on the implementation of the National Development Plan in the agriculture sector in mid-2003 through its technical cooperation programme. The programme will assist the Ministry to identify agriculture development priority projects in all subsectors and to formulate project proposals for funding support. The programme will involve full collaboration of the officials of all divisions in the Ministry. It will also enhance human and institutional capacity in the planning, identification and formulation of priority proposals through hands-on training, during the actual preparation of project proposals and later implementation of National Development Plan projects.

18. Following the decision of the World Food Programme (WFP) to withdraw from East Timor in June 2002, food assistance programmes to vulnerable communities have been implemented by the Government's National Disaster Management Office. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) continues

to assist the Office with the delivery of food to vulnerable communities upon request. The 1,200 tons of food stock left behind by WFP has since been utilized to meet the urgent food needs that emerged in 2002 as the result of the severe drought. Food security issues remain a major concern for rural communities. With its system of subsistence agriculture, Timor-Leste traditionally has to cope with annual food shortages, especially during the lean period between November and February. In 2003, the food security problem has again been acute owing to the delayed onset of the rainy season in addition to the effects of the mature El Niño phenomenon. At the request of the Government of Timor-Leste, FAO and WFP organized a joint crop and food supply assessment mission in April 2003. Based on their vulnerability analysis, it is expected that there will be household food shortages in many rural areas of the country, especially in Oecussi and the Central Highlands. The mission estimated the number of vulnerable people at 150,000, requiring approximately 14,000 tons of food aid in late 2003. Household food shortages are expected to commence in October 2003 and continue through the lean period until February 2004. Meanwhile, unseasonally heavy rains that fell in southern districts of Cova Lima, Ainaro, Manufahi and Viqueque in June 2003 caused the destruction of 1,000 hectares of rice fields and farmland, necessitating food aid for more than 7,000 people. The Government has requested international assistance not only to meet immediate humanitarian needs but also to assess food security requirements in the intermediate period of the next 6-12 months. In response to that request, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs provided an emergency grant of $50,000 for relief assistance in the affected areas.

19. To minimize the impact of the chronic food shortage, FAO implemented a project entitled "Urgent maize and rice seed multiplication at the rural community level in Timor-Leste. Phase II: Reduction of post-harvest losses". The aim of the project was to introduce appropriate post-harvest technology to reduce the loss of staple foods such as rice and maize after harvesting as a result of insect infestation, moisture and other factors, which have accounted for 25 per cent of post-harvest loss of grain. Project activities included distribution of seeds to returnees and training of 20 local blacksmiths to build metal silos. The blacksmiths will be provided with tools and materials free of charge to build silos in their home districts. Post-harvest machinery will also be provided to farming communities through implementing partners.

20. The second agriculture rehabilitation project (ARP II), funded by the Trust Fund for East Timor, has continued to assist the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in improving natural resource management practices and strengthens self-reliance among 14 upland and coastal communities in seven districts. It has also rehabilitated some 1,660 hectares of community irrigation schemes, 1,090 hectares of irrigation schemes that have suffered light-to-medium damage and 65 kilometres of access roads linking farmers to markets. The recent WFP/FAO report describes the rehabilitation works as having helped boost the rice harvest by 12 per cent in 2003, offsetting in part the substantial decline in the maize harvest due to last year's drought. So far 36,000 hectares, that is, 50 per cent of total potential irrigated land, has been rehabilitated under ARP I and II and with the assistance of another donor. ARP II also assisted in the establishment of 11 water user associations. With assistance from the project, 65 village livestock workers were trained to provide veterinary services in rural communities. Farmer members-based agriculture service centres were established in three district capitals, Maliana, Aileu and Viqueque, and

aim to provide assistance to rural farming households in the trade and transportation of their agriculture products. Another two such centres will be established in Suai and Los Palos.

V. Health

21. As stated in the National Development Plan, the Government is expected to ensure delivery of affordable and cost-effective preventive and curative health services to the community. That objective is closely linked to the National Poverty Reduction Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals. The Ministry of Health has led the health sector development relatively successfully, with the support of United Nations bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Bank and UNDP and with resources provided by donor countries, in particular in the form of two projects financed through the Trust Fund for East Timor administered by the World Bank. As a result, the Timorese authorities have assumed responsibility for providing and coordinating health services in all 13 districts. With support from the Trust Fund and United Nations bodies, the Ministry of Health has established a National Health Policy Framework and Hospital and Health Facility Configuration Policy to guide health system development — a remarkable achievement one year after independence.

22. The Ministry of Health initiated intensive recruitment of civil servants for the health sector immediately upon its establishment and has recruited 1,472 employees in various capacities in the health system. WHO has assisted in the recruitment process by drawing up the job descriptions and detailed roles and responsibilities for the posts. Financial support from the Trust Fund enabled the Ministry of Health to develop the capacity to undertake the recruitment. At present, there are 117 mobile clinics and 88 health posts, 54 community health centres without beds, 5 with observation beds and 5 with limited surgical capacity, 5 regional hospitals (Baucau, Cova Lima, Maliana, Oecussi and Maubisse) and 1 national hospital. Under the Trust Fund, 25 new community health centres have been constructed, some 20 others have been repaired and 7 more health centres are about to be constructed. An autonomous medication store for storing and managing pharmaceuticals throughout the country has also been established. A country-wide high-frequency communications system is also being installed in hospitals and health centres and will be completed by the end of 2003 under the Trust Fund. Detailed design work for five hospitals to be financed by the Fund and a donor is about to be initiated. Observations over 12 months reveal that the Ministry of Health has been able to continue providing basic health services for approximately 80 per cent of the population.

23. UNICEF carried out a multiple indicator cluster survey in August 2002 in close collaboration with the National Statistical Office. The final report was presented at the Timor-Leste and Development Partners Meeting in June 2003. The major findings of the survey include a very high fertility and infant mortality rate, high prevalence of childhood and maternal malnutrition, poor conditions at child delivery and low use of family planning methods. The Trust Fund-supported demographic and health survey was carried out in May and June 2003 under the overall guidance of the Ministry of Health and a steering committee made up of all concerned stakeholders. The survey was implemented by the National Statistical

Office of the Ministry of Planning and Finance. The Office is also taking responsibility for carrying out a pilot census of the population in July 2003 in preparation for the first comprehensive national census in 2004, which will receive technical and financial assistance from UNFPA and other development partners. A study of health-seeking behaviour supported by the Trust Fund will be initiated later in 2003.

24. The lack of doctors and trained nurses continues to be one of the major problems in the health sector in the country. In collaboration with WHO, the Ministry of Health has started an advance nurse training programme financed in part by the Trust Fund for East Timor to enable nurses to acquire the knowledge and skills to diagnose independently and treat patients in order to prevent diseases when doctors are not available. With support from UNICEF, the Ministry of Health continued to train midwives to develop their competence in carrying out safe and clean deliveries. To date, 227 midwives have been trained from all the 13 districts. In the current circumstances, nurse and midwife training is the most cost-effective strategy to achieve the goal of reducing the unacceptably high mortality rate associated with malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhoea and respiratory infections that now prevails in Timor-Leste.

25. Several outbreaks of diarrhoeal disease were investigated during the year. One small outbreak was shown to be due to *V. cholera*. Standard control activities were instituted and the outbreak was successfully controlled. The capacity of the Central Laboratory to isolate and identify intestinal pathogens has been enhanced. Guidelines for outbreak investigation prepared in consultation with the Ministry were introduced to district health management staff and activities to encourage the use of the guidelines continue. In response to the recent epidemic of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in the region of Asia and the Pacific, the Ministry of Health, with the support of WHO, established a surveillance system for the disease.

26. The Country Coordination Mechanism submitted a proposal for a malaria control programme to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Technical support for preparation of the proposal was provided by WHO and $2.9 million will be available for malaria control starting in July 2003.

27. Significant progress has been made towards the establishment of the national tuberculosis elimination programme in Timor-Leste. The programme is active in all 13 districts, with 20 diagnostic facilities. Since its inception, over 6,000 persons have been diagnosed and have started receiving treatment. An external evaluation of the national tuberculosis programme in March 2003 identified successful implementation of the programme with political and social commitment. The directly observed therapy short course (DOTS) coverage of the population has identified up to 81 per cent of the curative rate and more than 85 per cent in most of the tuberculosis centres. WHO also assisted the Country Coordination Mechanism in the development of the tuberculosis proposal, which has been submitted to the Board of the Global Fund for funding.

28. Leprosy has long been known to be endemic in Timor-Leste and consequently WHO has continued to provide the Ministry of Health with drugs to support multi-drug therapy (MDT) for leprosy patients. The national leprosy elimination programme is due to start in 2004.

29. With the support of donors, the Ministry of Health established mental health services in Timor-Leste and is planning to address psychological trauma issues in future by strengthening the capacity of national NGOs to provide psychological support for people in need.

30. Routine immunization of all children in the first year of life has increased from 15 per cent during the fourth quarter of 2001 to 59 per cent during the first six months of 2003. To further improve the immunization rate, the Ministry of Health, UNICEF and WHO jointly developed a five-year national immunization plan. The national immunization days for polio eradication in the entire country were observed in November and December 2000 with a total coverage of over 84 per cent. During the days observed in September and October 2002, the total coverage reached 97 per cent of targeted children under five years of age. UNICEF and WHO provided financial and staff support to organize and manage the campaign. UNICEF also supported a national workshop to develop micro-plans on immunization for the 13 districts, which was held in March 2003. A draft Extended Programme on Immunization (EPI) policy has been developed and is expected to be finalized shortly.

31. Progress has been made in taking steps to address the issue of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) in Timor-Leste. WHO chaired the United Nations theme group on HIV/AIDS, which provided inputs to and support for the Ministry of Health in the development of the national HIV/AIDS strategy. Additionally, technical advice and recommendations were made in surveillance, testing and treatment of HIV-infected individuals. A number of surveys were carried out to estimate the prevalence of HIV infection. Using two intakes of potential military recruits, 1,070 samples were tested from which no one proved positive, giving an estimated prevalence of 0.01-0.35 per cent. UNFPA, UNICFF, WHO and UNDP assisted in organizing the first national HIV/AIDS conference in Timor-Leste. The United Nations theme group has prepared a proposal to be submitted to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for programme acceleration funds in order to hold a workshop to develop an integrated United Nations work plan to support the Ministry of Health in its implementation of a national plan. UNFPA and WHO are working closely with Family Health International, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development, to develop and implement HIV/AIDS prevention programmes, including the development of behavioural surveillance activities. In partnership with the Australian Agency for International Development, UNDP assisted the Government in developing the first comprehensive and multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS/sexually transmitted infections (STI), 2002-2003, which was subsequently approved by the Council of Ministers in September 2002. UNDP also assisted the Government in organizing the first national conference on HIV/AIDS in May 2002.

32. Implementation of the integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI) programme has been carried out in accordance with the child health strategy of the Ministry of Health in Timor-Leste for children aged between one week and five years. A total of 107 health workers were provided with IMCI training, including 18 facilitators. A community IMCI programme is being developed and implemented throughout the country and a national working group on food and nutrition has been formed to review the draft national strategy.

33. Capacity-building of national health workers is the main priority of the United Nations entities working in this field. Over 1,000 Timorese have received training in health-related fields, including management, control and prevention of communicable diseases, health promotion, reproductive health and safe motherhood, child health, nutrition and environmental health. In addition, United Nations bodies provided technical assistance in formulating health policies and regulations.

34. The main challenges to be addressed by the health sector include the high rates of maternal and infant mortality, high mortality and morbidity due to communicable diseases, prevalence of malnutrition, iodine and vitamin deficiency, lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitary facilities and proper shelter for a majority of the population, poor knowledge on health matters among the general population, poor and inadequate access to health services and an inadequate management and referral system.

VI. Education

35. The Government continues to accord high priority to increasing access to primary and junior high school education, together with improving internal efficiency and reducing inequality. The programmes in that area are carried out as planned and the design is made for incentive partnership with the private sector and church. Gross primary school enrolments have reached 95 per cent and it is particularly gratifying that they have increased for girls and for youngsters from the poorest quintile of the population. The net enrolment rate in primary schools has recovered to about 75 per cent, while the transition rate from primary to secondary level stands at around 46 per cent. There is a need for considerable improvement in both the net enrolment and the transition rates through measures aimed at enhancing access to and quality of schooling as well as education and encouragement of parents to utilize the services.

36. The round-table mechanism sponsored by UNICEF in 2002 continues to facilitate discussions between the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, the church, other agencies and development partners on priority issues in the sector. The Ministry planned to organize a national consultative congress in financial year 2002/03 to discuss the development of a national education policy with an appropriate institutional framework.

37. UNICEF has supported curriculum development, focusing mainly on mathematics, science and health education. The pilot phase of the 100-school initiative aimed at such teaching quality improvement will be implemented on a larger scale during the period 2003-2005. The 100-school project has been extended to include a pilot parent-teacher association trial and to develop capacity within the Ministry of Education to monitor education indicators by facilitating the establishment of an education management information system.

38. The urgent need for science education in Timor-Leste has been highlighted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for East Timor in September 2002. The UNESCO mentor-based science education teaching programme is the first stage of a programme with a science park involving interactive exhibitions and mobile van activities to visit schools and remote communities. Main partners are science museums and centres in various countries, the National University of Timor-Lorosae and the Foundation of Portuguese Universities, the latter of which provides

science teaching at the National University of Timor-Lorosae. The Australian development scholarship programme has already enabled about 20 Timorese to obtain internationally recognized postgraduate degrees and is currently financing the studies of some 100 Timorese students.

39. A multilateral scholarship programme already provided opportunities for 1,400 students to continue their studies at Indonesian universities. Together with 7,500 students currently enrolled at the National University of Timor-Lorosae, they will form a body of important national potential. The language of instruction of all high school and university students is still Indonesian, while basic education shifted almost entirely to the Portuguese language. There is an identified urgent need to develop and deliver a large-scale additional vocational training programme to those students in languages and in mentoring, for example, so that many could become schoolteachers.

40. The Secretariat for Labour and Solidarity and the Ministry of Education are in the process of developing a joint programme of vocational training for all levels of skills and all academic backgrounds. UNDP and the technical expertise provided by UNESCO and ILO are instrumental in that process. The main aim of the programme is to prepare a large number of Timorese for an alternative to public sector employment and to open opportunities for social involvement to unemployed youth and their enrolment in vocational training.

41. Cultural studies and events have slowly started filling the gap between education and very basic home-based cultural activities. Several exhibitions and festivals were sponsored mainly by UNMISET, the church and NGOs. In the absence of bookshops, the first book fair sponsored by the Instituto Camões in March 2003 made some 80,000 books available to the Timorese.

42. The National Cultural Centre, Uma Fukun, is expected to become the focal point for the development and management of the tangible and intangible heritage of Timor-Leste culture. The National Museum, Gallery and Community Science Centre, which is part of Uma Fukun, would eventually provide the Timorese people with educational and entertainment opportunities with assistance from foreign academic institutions and United Nations entities.

43. Timor-Leste became the 189th member of UNESCO in June 2003. Both the visits of the President of Timor-Leste to UNESCO headquarters in Paris and of the Director-General of UNESCO to Timor-Leste strengthened cooperation in all fields of education and science.

44. Some 650 primary schools across Timor-Leste received hygiene and sanitation promotion education, which focused on assessing the physical water and sanitation needs of schools and on the provision of information and education related to good hygiene practices. The Government has identified 200 out of 650 selected schools for assistance from UNICEF. Hygiene and sanitation strategies and activities are implemented in 172 schools. Rehabilitation and construction of water reservoirs, school latrines, water-filtering units, hand-washing areas and waste-water disposal drains are at various stages of completion in 122 schools.

45. UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO, the World Bank and Education International initiated a project entitled "Focusing resources on effective school health" in January 2003 to assist educational policy makers and local school authorities to identify and address health-related problems that interfere with student enrolment,

attendance and learning. UNICEF and UNESCO have started to support education policy development, emphasizing, in particular, the right to education of the child and informal education for literacy.

46. UNICEF continues to provide support to eight "child-friendly spaces" established at the district level and operated as community-based centres for children, youth and families. Teams of early childhood staff have received basic training in child development and teaching, and the child-friendly spaces provide a safe, friendly space where children can engage in structured recreational and educational activities, as well as receive basic primary health and nutrition services.

47. Other international assistance to formal education at the basic level comes in large part through the fundamental schools quality project, managed by the World Bank and funded through the Trust Fund for East Timor. The project continues the work begun under the emergency support phase to rebuild and renovate classrooms, mainly in primary schools. It also provides basic school furniture and includes a textbook procurement component. It funds sector policy development work, for example, a recent national study of primary school student achievement. It is consolidating and deepening its focus on quality improvement, with new work under way to facilitate the redevelopment of the national primary school curriculum. Such fundamental schools quality project initiatives complement various UNICEF-supported activities, and synergies and collaboration are increasingly sought.

48. The UNICEF multiple indicator cluster survey in 2002 produced comprehensive data on women and children of Timor-Leste on issues concerning health, education, water and sanitation and demographic characteristics. The World Bank is also supporting a demographic and health survey of the population and UNFPA is working with the Ministry of Planning and Finance to prepare for the first national census. UNICEF is also supporting the development of a data information management system (DevInfo) within the Ministry of Planning and Finance to help collect data and monitor progress being made in attainment of key goals of the National Development Plan and the Millennium Development Goals.

VII. Vulnerable groups, including women

49. Much work has been undertaken during the past year on gender-based violence, including domestic violence and sexual assault. National NGOs took the lead in establishing a service network for victims of such violence, including a safe room at the national hospital. International NGOs, including the International Rescue Committee and Caritas Australia, carried out research on the extent of such violence and embarked upon community education programmes to begin to address the problem in local communities. UNFPA provided financial support for those initiatives as well as for the Government's Office for the Promotion of Equality, which developed legislation on domestic violence. A major achievement in that regard was the successful implementation of a national consultation in November 2002 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, which adopted a national policy paper on domestic violence. The legislation based on that policy paper will be presented to the Council of Ministers in 2003.

50. The PNTL took several initiatives in 2002 and 2003 to increase its effectiveness in dealing with domestic violence, which accounts for approximately 60 per cent of all incidents reported to the police. Those initiatives included

providing training to staff of the vulnerable persons units in all districts, introducing domestic violence into the curriculum of the Police Training Academy for all cadets and distributing a field manual on dealing with domestic disputes. Those efforts were assisted by UNFPA, which also provided motorbikes and digital cameras to the vulnerable persons units in order to improve their capacity to respond to domestic violence and sexual assault cases and to collect evidence as the basis for possible prosecution.

51. The UNICEF child protection programme continues to collaborate with the Government of Timor-Leste, the PNTL, UNMISET and local and international NGOs to raise awareness about children's right to a protective environment free from violence, abuse and neglect, exploitation and discrimination. Children's rights received heightened attention on 10 December 2002, when the National Assembly approved accession by Timor-Leste to the core international human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

52. UNICEF continues to work together with the Secretary of State for Labour and Solidarity in developing new policies and procedures. The draft policy and procedure for childcare centres and boarding houses is expected to be submitted to the Council of Ministers for consideration within the next few months. UNICEF continues to collaborate with a local NGO to address the emerging problem of children working and living on the street, primarily in Dili.

53. The Government's Recovery, Employment and Stability Programme for Ex-Combatants and Communities in Timor-Leste (RESPECT), executed by UNDP, has attracted much attention among the highest Timorese leadership as it aims to provide employment opportunities to the most vulnerable groups of society, including ex-combatants. United Nations entities, with the active support of IOM, continue to promote further returns of Timorese from Indonesia, and to assist those who have come back to the country, among other things in reuniting children with their families. Despite the phasing down of its operations, UNHCR remains committed to working with the national authorities to develop appropriate domestic legislation and institutions to meet the needs of the returnees. UNHCR will also work with authorities to ensure that East Timorese remaining in Indonesia have access to Indonesian citizenship, including non-discriminatory access to registration and national identity documents.

54. The inter-agency theme group on gender, chaired by the UNMISET gender focal point, meets regularly to coordinate gender-related issues between the United Nations entities, UNMISET and the Office for the Promotion of Equality of the Government of Timor-Leste.

55. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) re-established an office in Timor-Leste in May 2003. Its immediate work will involve training of women candidates for the *suco* elections and is working in partnership with the Office for the Promotion of Equality to support the production of Timor-Leste's first national report to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in March 2004. UNIFEM will continue to provide support for the economic and political empowerment of Timorese women through vocational training schemes, through its women's transformative leadership and citizenship

programme and by facilitating the creation of gender awareness in the National Statistical Office.

56. UNMISET and United Nations entities, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Secretary of State for Labour and Solidarity, have established a Trafficking Working Group. The Working Group is co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Secretary of State for Labour and Solidarity, and was established to respond to concerns arising from recent cases of trafficking in persons[1] uncovered by authorities and the recognition by the international community and the Government of Timor-Leste that it is now an opportune moment to coordinate activities and to design, establish and implement systems and policies to prevent trafficking in persons.

VIII. Refugees and national reconciliation

57. UNHCR and IOM reported that 31,882 persons repatriated from Indonesia in 2002, bringing the cumulative total of repatriated refugees to 224,576 since October 1999. UNHCR continued to provide protection for returnees and undertook comprehensive follow-up monitoring of all protection cases. In addition, returnees received food and non-food relief support, including medical assistance.

58. In December 2002, the Parliament of Timor-Leste ratified the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Subsequently, UNHCR decided that, effective 31 December 2002, the "ceased circumstances" clauses contained in the UNHCR Statute and in the 1951 Convention would be applicable to refugees from East Timor who had fled as a result of events prior to 25 October 1999. That decision affects, in particular, the estimated 28,000 East Timorese who remain in West Timor. While the mechanisms for repatriation remain in place, only around 100 persons have returned during 2003. As the UNHCR presence in Timor-Leste has been considerably reduced, increased cooperation between UNHCR, IOM, the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the UNMISET Human Rights Unit will ensure that future returnees are still able to benefit from transportation assistance and protection monitoring. Additionally, UNHCR and IOM continue to support reconciliation activities that aim to further stabilize the relationship between Timor-Leste and residents of West Timor.

59. Furthermore, since November 1999, UNHCR has been endeavouring to reunite separated children with their parents. As at 30 April 2003, a total of 2,161 children had been reunited with their parents, while 731 children were still separated (132 in Timor-Leste with parents in Indonesia, 346 in West Timor with parents in Timor-Leste or in other parts of Indonesia and 244 separated children in other parts of Indonesia). In nine cases, the location of the separated children is unknown.

60. UNHCR also continued to work for the adoption of national legislation on asylum, the creation of asylum institutions and capacity-building for government and non-government asylum institutions. In the years 2000 and 2002, 51 asylum-seekers were registered, of whom most were rejected (25) or withdrew their cases (19). Two disappeared, one was recognized and four cases are still pending.

61. The independent Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, established in January 2002 by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), continues to compile information on crimes and human

rights abuses committed between 24 April 1974 and 25 October 1999. Information on the crimes collected by the Commission is submitted to the Prosecutor General who decides on their mode of resolution, whether through the courts for serious crimes and through traditional justice mechanisms for minor crimes. Over the past six months, the Commission has conducted three national public hearings and multiple other hearings throughout the districts. It has received over 3,500 statements from victims and deponents (perpetrators) wishing to participate in community reconciliation. In March 2003, the Commission began an outreach programme for refugees in West Timor.

62. The President established two independent commissions on ex-combatants and veterans on 9 September 2002. The Commission for Former Combatants Affairs deals with ex-combatants involved in the 1975-1979 struggle for freedom, while the Commission for Falintil Veterans Affairs deals with the Falintil fighters during 1981-1999. The Commissions are responsible for defining criteria concerning the status of veterans and ex-combatants, identifying veterans and ex-combatants based on the criteria defined and development of policy options for veterans and ex-combatants, including how the needs of those groups can be addressed in the future.

63. Together with UNMISET, United Nations entities have established a human rights inter-agency theme group in February 2003 to discuss common concerns on human rights-related violations and have initiated the development of a joint action programme.

64. UNHCR and IOM continue to promote the repatriation of East Timorese refugees in West Timor, inter alia, by facilitating reconciliation activities between refugees in West Timor and their communities of origin in Timor-Leste, by implementing a mass information campaign addressed to refugees and through the presence of local staff in Kupang (West Timor) to liaise with the Indonesian authorities. Timor-Leste's emphasis on reconciliation and justice has helped promote the reintegration of the vast majority of returnees.

IX. Special fund for former Indonesian government employees

65. In 2001-2002, a special fund was established: (a) to encourage the return of former Indonesian government employees in West Timor together with their families; and (b) to help offset the loss of pensions and other benefits suffered by former civil servants upon Timor-Leste's independence. With more than 22,500 beneficiaries, the project is estimated to benefit up to 140,000 persons, including family members, which constitutes 17 per cent of Timor-Leste's population. The special fund is administered by UNDP. Some $5.7 million was mobilized from four donors for the purpose. As at April 2003, UNDP completed payments to 9,606 beneficiaries, amounting to $1,596,350. The remaining approximately 12,000 beneficiaries are expected to receive payments by the end of 2003.

X. Infrastructure

66. Significant progress has continued to be made in rehabilitating infrastructure. A major portion of the Trust Fund for East Timor has been allocated for administration by the Asian Development Bank to rehabilitate the devastated

infrastructure sector in the country. There have been substantial improvements in the level, quality and reliability of services in many areas.

67. In the power sector, the Government has secured additional capacity of 6 megawatts for the Comoro power station, which has made it possible to correct some of the problems and restored a reliable supply of electricity in Dili beginning in January 2003. Electricity tariffs have been revised to more reasonable and affordable levels. Revenue collection has been improving over the past few months. However, power supply for the rural districts is deficient. Currently, UNDP and other donors are providing the necessary funds, amounting to $1.2 million, for overall improvements of power supply in the districts. Under the Asian Development Bank-administered infrastructure rehabilitation project funded from the Trust Fund for East Timor, 14 rural power stations will be restored. At present, 11 have been fully rehabilitated and operational. The rehabilitation of Dili's water and sanitation system is approximately 50 per cent complete.

68. On-the-job training in water management and construction-related activities were undertaken in Dili, Aileu, Baucau and Manatuto districts. Training in tourism and management was provided to 20 community members. Since the approval of the UNDP Ainaro-Manatuto community activation projects in 2002, project implementation activities are now well under way as the foundations for project execution have been laid and personnel and equipment mobilized.

69. Dili Port, which has been rehabilitated and in use since 2001, is now in its second phase of development and improvement.

70. In the telecommunications sector, where the Asian Development Bank has given assistance, a build, operate and transfer (BOT) arrangement has been concluded with Timor Telecom, a joint venture company between Timorese entrepreneurs and Portugal Telecom International. The Government is a minor shareholder in the company, contributing essentially the equipment transferred to Timor Telecom. Under the arrangement, all districts will be equipped with both fixed and mobile lines within 18 months. The BOT contract is for 15 years. Handover of responsibility from the Australian Telecommunications Company (Telstra) to Timor Telecom took place at the end of February 2003.

XI. Donor assistance

71. The Government and the World Bank co-hosted the second and third Timor-Leste and Development Partners Meetings in Dili on 9 and 10 December 2002 and on 4 and 5 June 2003. The June meeting focused on progress and plans for the future implementation of the National Development Plan, resource utilization and mobilization and the next steps for capacity-building and partnerships to implement the Plan through the road map. Development partners commended the Government on making substantial progress during the first 12 months of its tenure towards the goals laid out in the National Development Plan. In particular, the following achievements were recognized: development of a planning framework that is closely related to budget and provides for performance criteria; crucial improvements in policy formulation and services delivery in education, health and power; solid progress in the legislative framework for the judiciary and private sector development; communication between the Government and the population through

national dialogue and open governance; and maintenance of sound budget and financial management systems.

72. The Government recognized that a low level of development projects was in the pipeline, mainly in areas of infrastructure services, irrigation systems and agriculture, private sector development, environmental programmes and natural resource management. Development partners and the Government agreed to hold detailed discussions over the coming months on innovative options for a sustainable medium-term public investment programme that is in line with the National Development Plan and the road map.

73. In support of the Government's development priorities, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have also been very successful in mobilizing resources from their regular budgets and from bilateral and multilateral sources.

74. The World Bank and the Government of Timor-Leste jointly held a meeting of the Donors' Council for the Trust Fund for East Timor, chaired by the World Bank on 3 June 2003. Total commitment authority under the Trust Fund stands at $176.80 million, while $142.6 million is expected to be disbursed by the end of the financial year 2003 (a four-year total). The World Bank is the trustee for the Fund, which is implemented jointly with the Asian Development Bank. The meeting reviewed the financial status of the trust fund; reviewed progress, highlighting issues of concern and proposed actions; and approved the work programme for July-December 2003.

XII. United Nations coordination

75. UNMISET and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes continue to work closely in Timor-Leste. Weekly heads of agencies meetings chaired by the United Nations Resident Coordinator, who is also the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, are often attended by senior officials of UNMISET, including the Director of Administration and the Chief Security Officer. Several inter-agency theme groups, including on HIV/AIDS, gender and human rights, the Information Committee and the Administrative Committee meet often in order to promote collaboration within the United Nations system.

76. On the occasion of Timor-Leste's admission to membership of the United Nations, the United Nations Country Team organized a seminar on 24 October 2002 on challenges and implications of Timor-Leste's membership of the United Nations. Participants included the President, the Prime Minister and other ministers, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and representatives of development partners and NGOs. The debate on the topic was broadcast live nationwide.

77. Following Timor-Leste's admission to membership of the United Nations in October 2002, the United Nations Country Team and the Government organized a two-day workshop on the Millennium Development Goals in March 2003. The objectives of the conference were to raise awareness and increase understanding of the Millennium Development Goals among Government and civil society, to take stock of the present status of development indicators in Timor-Leste and to explore relationships between the Millennium Development Goals and already established objectives and goals in the National Development Plan. Participants were senior officials of the Government, including the Prime Minister and several other

ministers, and other Timorese stakeholders, including representatives from districts, and development partners. The ministers made presentations according to their respective portfolios and the workshop elicited considerable interest from all quarters.

78. The first national report on the Millennium Development Goals is currently being prepared by the joint United Nations-Government Millennium Development Goals Steering Committee and is due for publication in August 2003.

79. The most important and fruitful coordination event was held from 2 to 4 July 2003, when heads and senior officials of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes as well as the World Bank took part in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework prioritization retreat in Bali. The retreat was also attended by three Vice-Ministers of Planning and Finance, Justice and Health, the Director-General of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports and other senior officials of the Government. They jointly identified the key areas on which the United Nations system should focus its attention and where it should work closely with the Government in the implementation of joint action programmes to achieve 15 specific outcomes in hunger and poverty reduction, health, education, as well as justice and gender empowerment.

XIII. Conclusions

80. Since the report of the Secretary-General of 23 August 2002 on humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development for Timor-Leste (A/57/353), much progress has been achieved. UNMISET has successfully assisted the Government in maintaining stability, law and order after the internal security threats posed in December 2002 and January 2003. UNMISET and the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have provided technical assistance in enhancing the capacity of the national police service and public administration that fully respect the principles of democratic governance and human rights. They continue to take the measures necessary to ensure that national security and governance structures are in place and functioning satisfactorily when UNMISET completes its mission mandate. However, it is not certain at the present stage whether the Government of Timor-Leste will be able to achieve those goals completely before the departure of UNMISET in May 2004.

81. The international community has continued to provide vital support to the nation-building efforts being made in Timor-Leste. Until the nascent country can become self- sufficient, it is essential for development partners to continue to assist the Government in enhancing the capacity of the national institutions entrusted with the execution of justice, law and order as well as those responsible for the delivery of public services providing for the basic welfare of the Timorese people. As stressed by the United Nations Development Assistance Framework prioritization retreat, it is important to reaffirm the centrality and the interdependence of food security, health and education as the foundation for human security and sustainable development and to provide assistance to improve them substantially along with the capacity of the institutions of governance.

Notes

[1] The Working Group adopts the definition of "trafficking in persons" found in article 3, subparagraph (a), of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.